



# First Alarm

Franklin County  
Public Safety

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## New Career Staff On Board

We would like to take this time to welcome several new members to the public safety career family. Mike Pruitt came to work in November as Training Coordinator/Recruitment and Retention Officer. Due to increased demand for ALS at night and the desire to have someone at night to act as a system manager two paramedic/firefighters were hired to work from 2:00 PM until 12:00 AM seven days a week. In mid February Justin Hines came to us from the Roanoke City Fire Department. He is a firefighter-paramedic. Patrick Meeks was also hired he comes to us from the Vinton Public Safety Department. We also have hired two new providers to work day shift to replace two providers that resigned to take employment elsewhere. Ron Gearheart, firefighter-paramedic comes to us from Lewis-Gale Hospital and Bryan Ferguson firefighter-intermediate also comes to us from Lewis-Gale. In addition to the full time employees we also have two new part time paramedic/firefighters. Belinda Hodges who is captain of squad 2 and Mike

Jenkins who is employed full time with the Roanoke City Fire Department have been hired. You will be seeing these new faces out and about so take a moment and say welcome to our family. The night staff are their to assist you with Advanced Life Support as needed and also to assist with the management of the entire public safety system at night. They are also available to help you with training or to attend your meetings to assist you with any item you may have. Pat's radio number is PS 4 while Justin's is PS 5. Feel free to contact them any time.



## Director Resigns

Chris Slem, Director has resigned to take a position with Hanover County Fire/EMS Department. Chris has been with us since 2003 and has advanced our department tremendously. In addition to improved response times and training, the department received over \$500,000 dollars in grant money. He was also the leading person in acquiring

the new radio system which should be in place soon. Chris will be a Battalion Chief in Hanover County. We wish him the best and thank him for what he did for Franklin County

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### Special points of interest:

- New Career Staff
- Director Resigns
- Strategic Plan
- OMD Talks
- Boones Mill Transports
- Squad 2 Number 1 in response times

## Strategic Plan Meetings



Recently the county held two open meetings on the new strategic plan that was developed by the public safety department. Numerous volunteers and citizens from the general populace attended and several great comments were voiced. The plan was developed by public safety administration staff in conjunction with a committee of volunteers from the fire and EMS ranks. Currently the strategic plan is being tweaked with the comments and concerns voiced at the meetings before being sent to the Board of Supervisors to review and vote on. The plan will give the department a vision

and direction in which we need to head to always be proactive in offering the best service to our customers. Franklin County is the fastest growing county in the Roanoke region according to recent published studies. With this growth the public safety expectations will also grow so the plan will act as a guide to assist us in this and will also become and important part of the complete countywide comprehensive plan. If you desire to see a copy of the plan it is available from the administration office, from your officers at your agency, or online at [www.franklincountyva.org](http://www.franklincountyva.org).



## Radio System

*“When we work at our highest level, the results can be breathtaking”*

The new radio system is near completion. All fire units have had new radio upgrades and most EMS units are complete. The towers are currently being installed and should be complete soon. When this system is complete we should see great improvements in our ability to communicate. At this time all the mobiles should have been installed in the fire apparatus and most of the rescue units have been complete. We will be

meeting with someone from each station soon to get the portables out to you. Please be reminded that once the new system is up and running the 9-1-1 center will no longer be able to communicate with you on low band. On the same line as the radio system we hope to be able to offer each station wireless internet access at about the same time. If you have questions please contact the administration office



## Boones Mill Begins Transports



Effective on January 13, 2006 Boones Mill Fire Department began to transport patients. Boones Mill Fire Department had been acting as a first responder agency since the Boones Mill Rescue Squad was disbanded in November 2004 due to lack of staff and failure to respond to calls. Larry Davids is serving as the EMS Coordinator under Chief Kerry Renick at station 7. They have been very busy since

beginning to transport and have excellent reaction and response times. Larry states “We are staffing the station just about every night with at least one EMT and one driver”. At the end of February station 7 had received 28 EMS calls for service. We would like to Thank Chief Renick and EMT Davids for all their hard work in getting station 7 EMS back up and running. Keep up the great work.

## Stories For Newsletter

If you are interested in writing or submitting a story for this newsletter please contact Billy Ferguson at the administration office. We will be TRYING to get it out every month in the future. All stories relating to Fire/EMS in general or to your agency is welcome.



## Burn Ban

As always happens every year the current statewide burn ban is now in effect. This burn ban runs from February 15 until April 30 every year. In addition at the time this article is written there is a TOTAL burn ban in the county. If you see someone burning please have them extinguish the fire and contact Fire Marshal Russell. The person doing the burning could be charged for this. Also let me take this time to review the burn

regulations in Franklin County. No fire can be started prior to 9:00 AM and nothing can be added after 9:00 PM and the fire must be put extinguished by midnight. Also someone must be with the fire at all times and have a water source readily available. The citizen doing the burn must also contact the communications center and obtain a burn permit. There is no charge for the permit. Failure to abide by these regulations could result

in charges being placed to recovery the cost of putting the fire out. If you desire further information please contact Division Chief Russell at the administration office.

*“Individuals win trophies, TEAMS win championships”*

## Response Times

Squad 2 has an EXCELLENT reaction and response time for this year to date. They have had 252 calls for service so far this year. Their reaction time is 2.8 minutes and their response time is 7.3 minutes. According to the JLARC study last year the average response time of all EMS agencies in the state of Virginia was 12 minutes. The American Heart Association recommends response times to be under 8

minutes to be able to save patients of sudden cardiac arrest. Squad 2 is under both of these times and should be commended highly for their tireless efforts. It has been noted that their reaction and response times have decreased tremendously since they began to staff their station 24 hours a day during the year 2005. Squad 2 should be considered a model agency for other county agencies to emulate.

Captain Belinda Hodges and her entire staff deserve a huge THANK YOU from the public safety staff and the entire county.





## Franklin County Public Safety

1488 Franklin Street  
PO Box 189  
Rocky Mount, VA 24151

Phone 540-483-3091  
Fax: 540-483-3086  
Email: [wferguson@franklincountyva.org](mailto:wferguson@franklincountyva.org)



## ACLS Changes

Universal Cardiac Arrest Algorithm

Unresponsive

**A**irway-open

Look for signs of life

**B**reaths

Give 2-5 initial breaths if no  
regular breathing

**C**ompression

**30 compressions then 2  
breaths until Defibrillator/  
Monitor attached**

### Assess Rhythm

#### Shockable

#### Nonshockable

VF/Pulseless VTach

PEA/Asystole

Give 1 Shock

Immediately Resume CPR

**ALS**

Immediately Resume  
CPR

### During CPR

Maintain Open Airway

Ventilate & Oxygenate

Vascular Access

Verify Electrode/Pad placement,  
contact

Correct reversible cause

### Consider

Airway adjunct

Vasopressor/Antiarrhythmic

### Monitor & manage

Glucose/temp/CO2/electrolytes

